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(54) **System for the optical identification of coding on a diagnostic test strip**

(57) Disclosed is an automated method for reading a test strip for the analysis of one or more analyte in a liquid test sample. The method involves the spectrophotometric reading of a test strip which bears at least two marker fields on its surface which are capable of reflecting light at different spectral regions from each other. The reading means of the spectrophotometer is pro-

grammed to discern information concerning the strip, such as what analyte the strip is designed to detect, from the sequences of spectral classifications by spectral reflectancy measurements of the strip's marker fields.

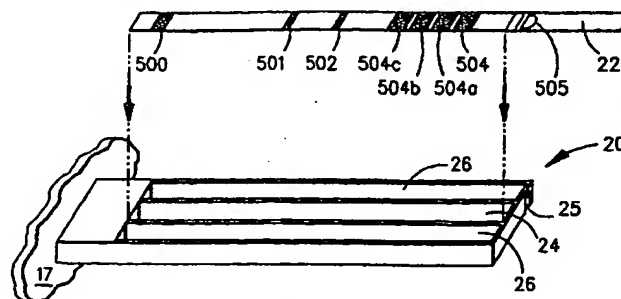


FIG. 2

EP 0 837 320 A3



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 97 11 7373

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.6)
D,A	US 4 592 893 A (POPPE WERNER ET AL) 3 June 1986 * column 5, line 14 - column 6, line 52; figures 1,2 *	1,10	G01N21/86 G06K19/06
A	DE 43 45 151 A (DRAEGERWERK AG) 11 August 1994 * column 3, line 35 - column 4, line 10; figure 1 *	1,10	
A	EP 0 451 981 A (CASCADE MEDICAL INC) 16 October 1991 * column 4, line 8 - line 19; claims 1-6; figures 5,6 *	1,10	
A	WO 91 11700 A (GDS TECHNOLOGY INC) 8 August 1991 * page 9, line 8 - line 19 * * page 13, line 15 - line 19 * * page 22, line 13 - line 21 *	1,10	
A	EP 0 383 209 A (X RITE INC) 22 August 1990 * column 47, line 46 - column 49, line 27; figure 30 *	1,10	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.6) G01N G06K
A	EP 0 590 587 A (DAINIPPON INK & CHEMICALS) 6 April 1994 * abstract; figure 1 *	1,10	
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 4 November 1998	Examiner Tabellion, M
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X: particularly relevant if taken alone Y: particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A: technological background O: non-written disclosure P: intermediate document</p> <p>T: theory or principle underlying the invention E: earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D: document cited in the application L: document cited for other reasons &: member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			

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